

4. 24 Sep 51

RAKHMANOV was interrogated by Major BISHOP from P5 accompanied by Capt DOBBIE from G (INT). During this interrogation RAKHMANOV was very friendly, in good spirits and gave the impression of a satisfied man.

He was somewhat vague in details of his story and particularly in dates; he did not know for instance on which day of the month he was born and in fact did not give the exact date of any event in his life with the exception of the date of his desertion. This however was not considered out of the ordinary as his life history was plausible and typical of a peasant such as he appeared to be.

There is, however, one item in his life history which must be taken with reserve. This is his statement that after his escape from KOPYEYSK he managed to avoid arrest for one year although he lived and worked in his native village, reported himself to the military authorities in his district town and even paid the membership fee to the KMSOMOL. RAKHMANOV was questioned on this point and the only explanation he could offer was that he always managed to leave his house before the militia entered it and the local population helped him.

RAKHMANOV gave as the reason for his desertion his dissatisfaction with the Soviet standard of life.

When questioned as to whether he had no fear of being returned to the Soviets, his answer was a categorical "NO". This was so surprising that he was asked to explain why he believed so firmly that he was not going to be handed back to the Soviets. He stated that after what had happened to INYAKIN he had no fear on this point. He further stated that he overheard a conversation between his Platoon Commander and the CO of the Bn, and thus learnt that Major KRUCHKO was sent to the British Zone to induce INYAKIN to return to his unit. But INYAKIN, in spite of a telegram KRUCHKO had read out as purporting to have come from INYAKIN's mother refused to return. RAKHMANOV stated that the troops were at first told that INYAKIN was kidnapped but later when INYAKIN declined to return they were told that INYAKIN was a British spy and therefore sheltered by the British. Major KRUCHKO on his return to the Bn allegedly said that INYAKIN was black from beating, looked as though he was under the influence of drugs and could not speak.

(NOTE: RAKHMANOV stated on the 1 Oct 51 that he was told about the telegram by Capt HARTMAN on 23 Sep 51. Capt HARTMAN confirmed this. It is interesting to note that RAKHMANOV stated on the 24 Sep 51 that the conversation between his Platoon Commander and his CO was the source of this information. On the other hand the story about INYAKIN if taken without the information about the telegram might be considered as the sort of explanation the Soviets would give the troops under the circumstances).

He declined to be used for propaganda purposes giving as an excuse fear about the fate of his relatives.

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At the conclusion of the interrogation he was told that after approx a week he would be transferred from "WEYMOUTH" to a private house where he would be free and that in this house he would live as our guest until suitable work or an opportunity for emigration was found.

He appeared very grateful and at length expressed his thanks.

During this interrogation he made a favourable impression as a simple Russian peasant of average intelligence and poor education.

5. 25 Sep 51

RAKHMANOV was interrogated by Major BISHOP. The subject of the interrogation was RAKHMANOV's experience in the kolkhoz and any other information he could supply (see App 'A' and App 'C').

During this interrogation he proved a disappointing source of information. Although he talked at length all his statements were rather general and he had to be asked specifically for all details.

At the conclusion of the interrogation his measurements were taken and he was told that he would be issued with civilian clothing during the week and that at the end of the week or at the beginning of the following week he would be moved to a private house.

He was also asked whether he needed anything or had any complaints. He had no complaints and no wishes and once more thanked his interrogator for kind treatment and interest in his welfare.

6. 26 Sep 51

It was ascertained from the guards in "WEYMOUTH" that RAKHMANOV was a little restless. He wanted to wander around the compound rather than remain in his room. His wishes could not be fully met as there was another man in the same compound and the guards had to prevent any meeting between the two.

7. 27 Sep 51

The guards found RAKHMANOV in a similar mood as on 26 Sep 51. In addition he asked for more cigarettes having smoked all those he was issued with by the guard and also those given to him by interrogator. He did not receive the cigarettes as the shop was closed and the money had first to be obtained from the Adjutant.

At lunch time he refused food and at dinner time accepted only some tea.

8. 28 Sep 51

Mr. SEVIER from P5 visited RAKHMANOV in order to take his photograph, needed for his documentation. To Mr. SEVIER, RAKHMANOV stated his wish to be returned to the Soviets.

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At 1130 hrs Major BISHOP interviewed RAKHMANOV, pretending not to know about his conversation with Mr. SEVIER and giving as the reason for his visit interest in RAKHMANOV's welfare.

RAKHMANOV was found in an extremely annoyed state, his face was set and unsmiling. He began the conversation by accusing the British authorities of kidnapping him from his post and Major BISHOP for trying to bribe his loyal Soviet soul with false kindness. He demanded to be given immediately his Soviet uniform and his documents and to be taken immediately to BERLIN and returned to his unit. Should Major BISHOP fail to satisfy his wishes forthwith he threatened to smash the place up, to kill the guards and to escape.

Any persuasion and appeals to reason he met with a stream of abuse.

He stated in particular that:

- (a) he was kidnapped and held against his will
- (b) everything he said previously was a lie
- (c) he would not explain his behaviour between 21 and 28 Sep 51 because it was a military secret
- (d) his place was with the Soviet Army and not with the capitalists and enemies of the USSR and the Soviet people
- (e) he hoped for an opportunity to fight the British.

As RAKHMANOV had worked himself up, almost to a frenzy, and ran around the room he was shouted down and told to sit on a chair. He obeyed and then asked for a cigarette.

During the conversation lasting for the next two hours the foolishness of his request and its inevitable consequences were explained to RAKHMANOV but he stubbornly maintained his attitude. At approx 1500 hrs he refused to say anything more, refused to put in writing his request to be handed back to the Soviets and presented the interrogator with the following ultimatum: Should he not be handed over to the Soviets within the next hour he would smash all the furniture, kill the guards and escape.

In reply to this he was informed that as long as he behaved normally there would be no change in his treatment, otherwise he would be placed in an empty room where he would have nothing to destroy and any attempt on his part to overcome the guards would be promptly dealt with.

He was further advised to think things over and should he still wish to go back on the next day his wish would be satisfied.

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In the evening when he was permitted to move freely within the compound he attacked the guards and during the struggle he sustained a slight injury to the left ear. He was then placed in an empty room.

9. 29 Sep 51

RAKHMANOV was seen in the morning by Major BISHOP. He had quietened down considerably and when asked for the reason of his behaviour on the previous day he explained that he had made his mind up to return to the Soviets and still wished to return. He still maintained that he was kidnapped.

When asked why he attacked the guards he stated that he had no intention to harm the guards but he admitted that he was rather difficult and his actions could have been taken by the guards as an attack with malicious intent.

He asked for cigarettes and permission to return to his previous room. This was granted on the condition that he behaved normally and stayed in his room until such time as the British authorities handed him back to the Soviets. He then gave his word of honour to wait quietly and patiently for the decision of the British authorities.

He still maintained that he was kidnapped and gave an account of the events from which it can be clearly seen that the whole story was a pure invention (for his story see Appendix 'D').

By the end of the interview he became quite cheerful again.

10. 30 Sep 51

RAKHMANOV was seen by Capt HARTMAN and was found in a good mood but he still wished to be returned to the Soviets.

11. 1 Oct 51

RAKHMANOV was interviewed by Major LINDSAY and Capt HARTMAN. He was told that the purpose of this interview was to obtain in writing his request to be returned to the Soviets. He wrote a formal request to be returned to the Soviet authorities.

After this interview he was seen by Major BISHOP and Capt HARTMAN. He was very friendly again and although he still maintained that he was kidnapped and therefore should be handed back to the Soviets it was obvious that he realised himself that nobody would believe his story. At the conclusion of the interview he thanked both Major BISHOP and Capt HARTMAN for all they had done for him. Before parting he was told that on the next day he would be handed over to the Soviet authorities, that both interrogators were sorry for him but his life was his own and it was up to him to decide what he wanted to do with it. He then stated almost apologetically that he felt his place was with the Russian people and not in the West.

/II. PERSONAL HISTORY